

K STREET SE MEETING NOTES - OCTOBER 22, 2008



On October 22, 2008 the City of Auburn Mayor and City staff met with neighbors of the K Street SE Neighborhood at Pioneer Elementary, 2301 M Street SE, to discuss neighborhood concerns.

Staff in Attendance: MAYOR PETE LEWIS, COMMUNITY SERVICES MANAGER DUANNA RICHARDS, COMMUNITY SERVICES PROJECT ASSISTANT KIRSTEN REYNOLDS, POLICE PATROL COMMANDER BILL PIERSON, TRANSPORTATION PLANNER TIFFIN GOODMAN AND ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF K-12 STUDENT LEARNING FOR THE AUBURN SCHOOL DISTRICT ROD LUKE

Community Members in Attendance: AMY GOLDBERG; CHUCK AND MARIAN J.; DARLI SKAAR; DEREK AND CLAUDIA FOX; GWEN COEN; HARRY AND SUSAN CAROLLO; JANEL BRITTEN; JOAN SNYDER; KAREN ROARK; KELLY HAGGETT; PAM MARTIN; RUTH LUGUSON; TERESA MILLARD; TIM DWIGHT; VICKIE AND CHUCK TUCCI

Welcome and Introductions:

- Mayor Lewis opened the meeting by welcoming neighbors and with City staff introductions. Rod Luke, Assistant Superintendent of K-12 Student Learning for the Auburn School District, talked about developing a new three-year strategic plan focused on district improvements and improving learning for all students. The School District is holding community forums and sending out surveys in your utility bills for parents, students and community members; these surveys will be available both electronically and in hard copy formats. Mayor Lewis then facilitated the audience participation portion of the meeting and discussed a variety of topics, including, but not limited to the following sections.

General Questions/Comments

- Youth are invading and vandalizing residents' mailboxes; several fires have been started inside the boxes. Other issues residents are having are the placement of mailboxes on K Street; mailboxes are constantly getting knocked over by cars parking in the gravel area along K Street (which is owned by the Auburn School District). Mayor Lewis explained that all mailbox locations are controlled by the US Postal Service and there is nothing the City can do to change or implement new standards for this.
- Streets are very narrow in this neighborhood so people park on the landscaping strips. It was clarified this is actually against City Code and citizens could be issued a violation for parking there. Residents asked to either have this enforced or changed to allow for parking in a safe manner. Mayor Lewis commented this is a difficult issue; the Municipal Services Committee, a sub-committee of City Council, is exploring different options how to best deal with this.
- Mayor's Update – people were invited to sign up for a weekly update from the Mayor. Every Friday he sends out events and updates on what's been happening in and around the city. Emergency traffic updates are also sent out so you know to avoid those areas.

Police Related Questions/Comments

- Mayor Lewis explained that Auburn has 102 commissioned Police officers that patrol six Police sectors; there are twelve officers out at any given time covering 212 miles of roads, serving 67,000 people in two counties that are divided by two rivers.
- Residents were encouraged to report everything to 911. We, the citizens of Auburn, own the 911 system. PLEASE NOTE: If calling from a cell phone you need to ask for an "Auburn Call Receiver." You should call 911 whenever you have an emergency, feel something suspicious is going on, need to speak with an officer or file a report. (For your convenience our online reporting system at http://www.auburnwa.gov/police/online_reporting.asp is also available 24 hours a day if you would prefer to file your report that way.) In addition to emergency issues, residents should also call 911 for non-emergency issues such as street lights out, stop lights out, missing stop signs, fireworks, loose dogs, sewer backups, water leaks, etc.

Auburn shares ownership of the 911 system with other South King County cities and the calls go to a dispatch center so residents shouldn't worry about tying up the phone line when making non-emergency calls. When you call 911 it will be answered by a "Call Receiver." The Call Receiver will determine whether or not your call is an emergency to be handled right away or to have an officer make contact with you to file a non-emergency report. They will ask questions which are specifically designed to obtain information so that the proper response can be made for your call.

- There was a report of a teenager spray painting a fence at 602 22nd Street; the resident called in the incident along with the license plate of the vehicle he was driving to 9-1-1.
- Graffiti is an ongoing problem for property owners and neighborhoods. City Code requires property owners to remove graffiti within 15 days; a new Graffiti Removal Assistance Program was created in partnership with Parker Paint to help property owners take action. If neighbors are having graffiti problems they should call the City's Code Enforcement Division to report the problem (253-931-3090), the officer will open a case and call your information into Parker Paint. Residents can go to the Parker Paint in Auburn and pick up supplies to cover the graffiti.

There was a suggestion to have kids on detention do community service in the neighborhood, such as remove graffiti. Mayor Lewis clarified the State of Washington will not allow for this type of activity. Citizens were encouraged to contact their local State Representatives with these types of ideas.

- Residents commented that they've seen some tagging on the trails, but Parks staff responded quickly and effectively to cover this tagging. With reports of increased graffiti, residents wondered if it was gang related. There was discussion about two groups that haven't been confirmed as gangs but that Police are seeing illegal activity from; they have been known to recruit high school youth because there is more money to be made off these kids. Mayor Lewis invited the residents to attend the Gang Awareness and Intervention Workshop scheduled on 10/23/08 at the Senior Center to learn more about this topic. Mayor Lewis explained that it is vital that citizens, schools and the City work as partners to implement preventative measures.
- Bill Pierson, South Sector Police Commander, spoke to the group about Block Watch. When asked if anyone was interested in starting an organized Block Watch group several

people stated they were already involved with an organized group and one additional person raised their hand. Commander Pierson explained that neighborhoods have been successful in solving problems just by communicating with each other. Block Watch groups around the city feed the Police Department very valuable information that officers do depend on. Commander Pierson promised there will be more focused traffic enforcement in the area, including placement of a radar sign on K Street.

- Community Policing – one resident reported when they are out in their yard and/or porch kids will behave; it's when they aren't present that theft and vandalism occurs.

Traffic and Street Related Questions/Comments

- Residents asked for a flashing School Zone sign on K Street. The group discussed costs of traffic calming devices: flashing lights cost approximately \$3,000 and radar signs cost approximately \$5,000. Speed trailers are a lot of work; they must be set up and removed every day and evening to prevent theft. Radar signs have improved; in the past Police found that some people would speed intentionally to see how fast they could go by viewing it on these radar signs; now the signs only say "over speed limit".
- There was discussion regarding the PhotoSAFE system. Mayor Lewis noted there has been a 40% reduction of accidents and not one fatality accident in those intersections since the cameras were put in. He also clarified that while gross receipts from the system were over \$900,000 for the year, costs to pay to install and administer the system were over \$740,000. Since the City Council took action to ensure the net proceeds from PhotoSAFE would go towards neighborhood traffic calming improvements in Auburn's communities at least \$165,000 a year has gone toward local traffic calming improvements such as stop signs, speed bumps, flashing lights, etc. Mayor Lewis explained there is a new initiative on the fall ballot that transfers any PhotoSAFE proceeds from local municipalities to the State. Without this funding the neighborhood traffic calming program could be in jeopardy.
- Residents talked about 25th Street and the barricade. Mayor Lewis clarified that King County took 25th Street in as a public street. Auburn doesn't accept non-paved roads as public streets; it's up to the individual property owners and developers to put streets in, not the City. Because it was already accepted the following needs to happen: curbs and gutters must be installed, property dedicated to right-of-way. The neighborhood will have a more focused meeting regarding this issue in the future.
- Several items requested / reported included, but were not limited to:
 1. A pothole reported at 17th Street, it's been there for a year. Mayor Lewis said he doesn't remember seeing a pothole there but would have it checked out.
 2. A stop sign was request by the residents at 23rd and H Street. This street is offset which creates a blind corner.
 3. New speed bumps on K Street, in front of school from corner of 21st to 25th Street.
 4. King County Metro buses speed on F Street between 29th and 21st. Suggestion was to post the speed limit sign northbound and have a Police officer wait for speeding during the set schedule.
 5. 21st and K Street has crosswalks on three sides, can the fourth side be installed?

6. Parents are dropping kids off at the crosswalk in front of Olympic Middle School because the parking lot is blocked off, can the parking lot be reopened?
 7. 23rd and F Street needs a crosswalk.
- Several issues discussed regarding sidewalks, and included, but were not limited to:
 1. Safe Walking Path Program – Auburn currently has three Safe Walking Paths which were paid for by the State through a grant program. Per state law public funds cannot be used for private use; however, the City is able and willing to help neighborhood get sidewalks in at only 50% of the costs, the City will pay for the other 50%. This is done through a process called a Local Improvement District (LID).
 2. One resident stated that K Street needs a Safe Walking Path; they reported that 50 to 100 kids come down this street carelessly on bikes, walking in the road and sometimes fights break out.
 3. There is no sidewalk on 21st Street. The missing section is located between two schools; residents wanted to know if the School District would pay for sidewalks? Mayor Lewis explained because is not attached to either school property they cannot pay for it.
 4. 23rd and K Street there is a four foot cyclone fence that goes into the road, forcing pedestrians into the road to get around it. Is there anything the City can do to get this fence out of the right-of-way? Mayor Lewis said the City will check into this.
 5. Kids are walking in the road on 21st and on F Street. One resident suggested putting a pedestrian barrier with asphalt (like on F Street between 25th and 29th Street). One solution is for the residents to use some community policing techniques, like starting a Block Watch; the Police Department will help residents to do this.

Summary of Solutions Discussed/Action Items

- Check into the cyclone fence located at 23rd and K Street; City will verify if fence is in the right-of-way or on private property.
- Bill Pierson, South Sector Commander, said that there will be some focused traffic enforcement in the area including a radar sign place on K Street.
- Staff will look at several items requested / reported which include:
 1. A pothole on 17th ST.
 2. Placement of a new stop sign at 23rd and H ST.
 3. New speed bumps on K ST, in front of school from corner of 21st to 25th ST.
 4. Catch King County Metro buses speeding on F ST between 29th and 21st.
 5. Crosswalks at 21st and K ST (fourth side) and 23rd and F ST.
 6. Open Olympic Middle School parking lot so parents don't have to drop of kids on street in front of Olympic Middle School.

Community Services Team Contact Information:

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